Witness Bill Bartlett drew this picture of the figure he saw creeping along a low wall of loose stones late on the evening of April 21, 1977, in Dover, Mass.

THE DOVER HUMANOID

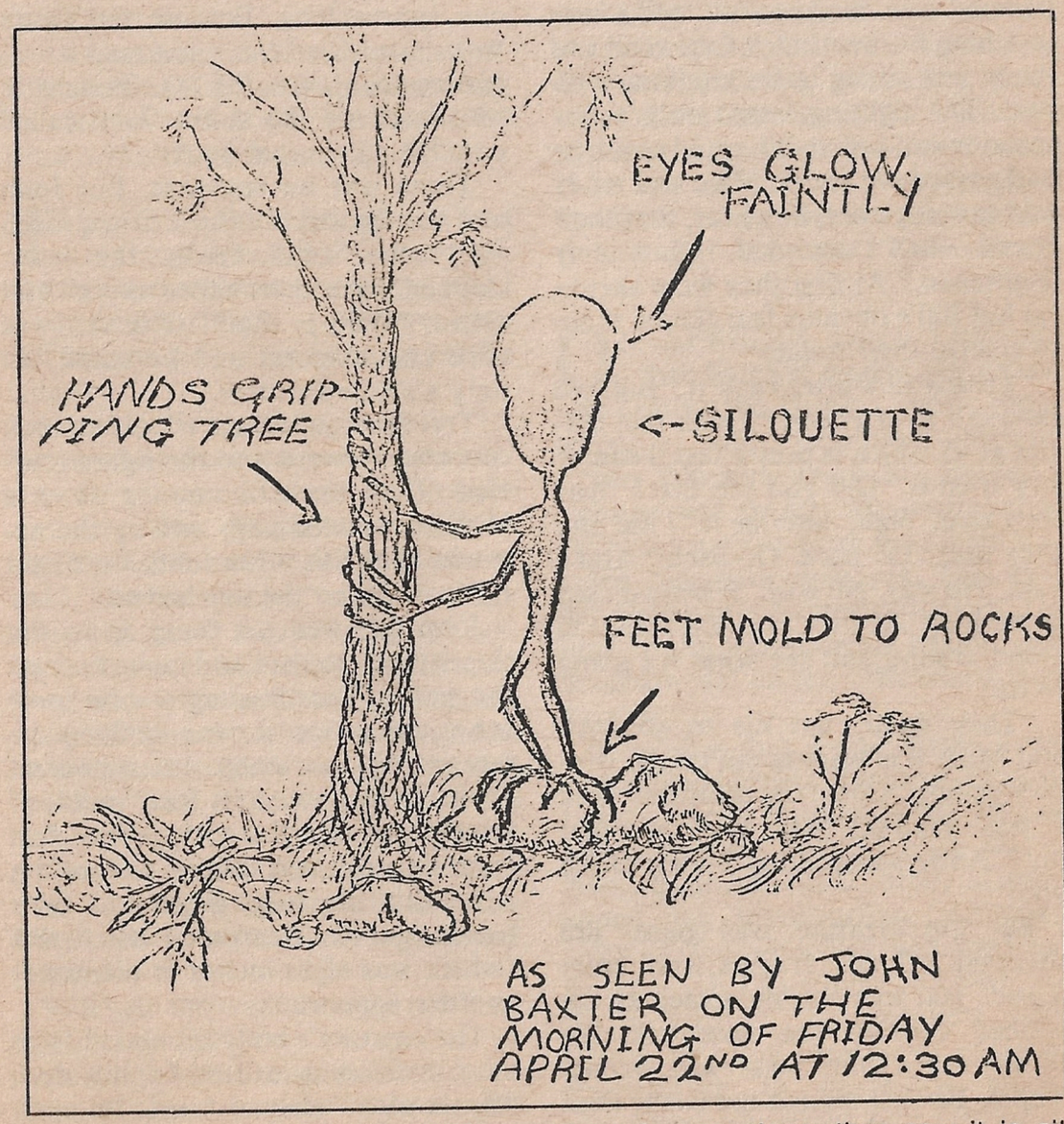
Whether a UFO being or a legendary creature from folklore, four Massachusetts teenagers swear they saw it.

By Jerome Clark

DOVER, THE wealthiest town in Massachusetts, is 15 miles southwest of Boston. Although it is heavily wooded and its houses are several hundred feet apart, it is hardly a place where one would expect to encounter a strange creature unknown to science — but that's exactly what four teenagers claim they saw during a 25½-hour period in April 1977.

The whole bizarre affair began at 10:30 on the evening of April 21 as three 17-year-olds, Bill Bartlett, Mike Mazzocca and Andy Brodie, were driving north on Dover's Farm Street. Bartlett, who was behind the wheel, spotted something creeping along a low wall of loose stones on the left side of the road. At first he thought it was a dog or a cat — until his headlights hit the thing directly and Bartlett realized it was nothing he had ever seen or heard of before.

The figure slowly turned its head and stared into the light, its two large, round, glassy, lidless eyes shining brightly "like two orange marbles." Its head, resting atop a thin neck, was big and watermelon-shaped and fully as large as the rest of the body. Except for its oversized head, the creature was thin, with long spindly arms and legs and large hands and feet. The skin was hairless and peach-colored and appeared to have a rough texture ("like wet sandpaper," Bill subse-


EYES GLOW FAINTLY
HANDS GRIPPING TREE
←SILOUETTE
FEET MOLD TO ROCKS
AS SEEN BY JOHN BAXTER ON THE MORNING OF FRIDAY APRIL 22ND AT 12:30AM

John Baxter claims he followed the creature down a slope, then saw it in silhouette as it stood near a tree with its long fingers entwined around the trunk.

quently would tell investigators

The figure, which stood no more than four feet tall, was shaped like "a baby's body with long arms and legs." It had been making its way uncertainly along the wall, its long fingers curling around the rocks, when the car lights surprised it.

Unfortunately neither of Bill's companions saw the creature. Mike was watching his own side of the road and Andy was sitting in back talking with him. The sighting lasted only a few seconds and before Bill could speak he had passed the scene. Mike and Andy told investigators, however, that their friend had sounded "genuinely frightened." At first they were skeptical but Bill's obvious fear forced them to change their minds.

"I really flew after I saw it," Bill told Boston's *Real Paper*. "I took that corner at 45 which is pretty fast. I said to my friends, 'Did you see that?' And they said, 'Nah, describe it.' I did and they said, 'Go back. Go back!' And I said, 'No way. No way.' When you see something like that, you don't want to stand around and see what it's going to do.

"They finally got me to go back and Mike was leaning out of the window yelling, 'Come on, creature!' And I was saying, 'Will you cut that out?' Andy was yelling, 'I want to see you!' "

But the creature was gone. Bill dropped off his friends and went home. He was visibly upset as he walked through the door and his father asked him what was wrong. Young Bartlett related the story, then withdrew to sketch what he had seen.

In the meantime another teenager was about to see the creature which researcher Loren Coleman later dubbed the "Dover Demon."

Around midnight John Baxter, 15, left his girl friend Cathy Cronin's house at the south end of Millers High Road in Dover and walked up the street on his way home. Half an hour and about a mile later, he saw someone approaching. Because the figure was quite short John assumed it was his acquaintance, M. G. Bouchard, who lived on the street. John called out, "M. G., is that you?"

There was no response. But John and the figure continued to approach each other until finally the latter stopped. John then halted as well and asked, "Who is that?" The sky was dark and overcast and he could see only a shadowy form.

Trying to get a better look he took one step forward and the figure scurried off to the left, running down a shallow wooded gully and up the opposite bank. As it ran John could hear its footfalls on the dry leaves.

John followed the thing down the slope, then stopped and looked across the gully. The creature — for now John could see it was nothing he recognized — stood in silhouette about 30 feet away, its feet "molded" around the top of a rock several feet from a tree. It was leaning toward the tree with the long fingers of both hands entwined around the trunk (which was eight inches in diameter) as if for support.

The creature's body reminded John of a monkey's, except for its dark "figure-eight"-shaped head. Its eyes, two lighter spots in the middle of the head, were looking straight at John,

who after a few minutes began to feel decidedly uneasy. Realizing he never had seen nor heard of such a creature before and fearing what it might do next, he backed carefully up the slope, his heart pounding, and "walked very fast" down the road to the intersection at Farm Street. There a couple passing in a car picked him up and drove him home.

As soon as he got there, he went inside and like Bill Bartlett, whose story he claims he had not yet heard, he drew a sketch of the strange being.

* * *

THE NEXT DAY Bill Bartlett told his close friend Will Taintor, 18, about his experience. And that night — around midnight — Taintor himself caught a fleeting glimpse of the creature.

He was driving Abby Brabham, 15, home when the encounter took place. As they passed along Springdale Avenue, Abby spotted something in the headlights on the left side of the road. The "something" was a creature crouched on all fours, facing the car. Its body was thin and monkey-like; its head was large and oblong, with no nose, ears or mouth. The thing was hairless and its skin was tan or beige in color. The facial area around the eyes was lighter and the eyes glowed *green*. Abby insisted this was the case, even after investigators told her that Bill Bartlett had said the eyes were orange.

Will saw the creature only momentarily and had the impression of something with a large head and tan body, with its front legs in the air. He didn't know what it was but he did know it was not a dog.

Frightened, Abby urged him to speed up so they could get away. Like John Baxter before her she seemed frightened of what the creature might do.

Will claims that only after they left the scene did he recall Bill's sighting. His own glimpse had been so brief he probably would have thought little of it if Abby had not been with him. He asked her to describe the figure, deliberately phrasing misleading questions about aspects of the creature's appearance he knew not to be true in order to check her story against Bartlett's (which he did not mention to her). But Abby stuck to her story.

* * *

ON APRIL 28 Loren Coleman, then living in nearby Needham, was visiting the Dover Country Store when a store employee, Melody Fryer, told him about Bill Bartlett's sighting and sketch. She promised to get him a copy and two days later provided him with drawings. The next day Coleman interviewed Bartlett. On May 3 he questioned Baxter and Brabham and on the fifth talked with Taintor.

Soon after that Walter Webb of the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization, Joseph Nyman of the Mutual UFO Network and Ed Fogg of the New England UFO Study Group joined the investigation. Although none of the witnesses had reported seeing a UFO in connection with the Dover Demon, the ufologists were struck by the creature's apparent resemblance to humanoid beings sometimes associated with UFOs.*

*See Ted Bloecher's "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," January 1978 FATE.

The investigators interviewed the witnesses' parents, who said they believed the stories. The Bartletts said their son is "very honest and open" and not the kind of person who enjoys playing pranks. Mrs. Baxter remarked that her son "never made up stories" — meaning, apparently, that he never made up stories which he passed off as true; his father told a reporter that his son writes science fiction. But he still didn't question John's honesty. John confirmed that he is a science fiction enthusiast but insisted that had nothing to do with his report.

Will Taintor's father and mother both accepted his story. His father believed Will and Abby had mistaken a conventional animal for the creature; the mother, on the other hand, felt they had seen something genuinely unknown.

Alice Stewart, who owns the land closest to the spot where John Baxter allegedly saw the Demon, said she had not seen or heard anything unusual that night. Her dogs, which were inside at the time of the reported encounter, had not barked.

Dover Police Chief Carl Sheridan spoke highly of young Bartlett and described him as "a reliable witness." High school principal Richard Wakely told Coleman, "I don't think these kids got together and invented it." They are not troublemakers — just "average students." A police officer said, "At first I was going to ask one of the witnesses to give me whatever it was he was smoking, but I know all four and I know that to all of us they're very reputable people."

On April 25, four days after the first sighting, Robert Linton, science instructor at Dover-Sherborn, overheard Bill Bartlett discussing the encounter with classmates. Later Linton asked him about it and the youth provided a full account and drew a picture of the thing. (Bartlett is an accomplished artist and a member of Boston's Copley Art Society.) Linton, who said Bill told him that the experience "scared hell out of him," accepted the story because of the young man's good reputation.

The only negative comment came from one of Bill's teachers. "If I had to pick someone to pull something like this," he said, "it would be Bartlett." He described the youth as troubled and frustrated. The teacher, who asked not to be identified, made several other, more specific allegations which subsequent probing proved to be either untrue or only partially true.

"Because this individual is the only person we uncovered who held an unfavorable view of this witness and since it was in such total contrast to the opinions of others," investigator Webb (the same researcher, incidentally, who first interviewed Barney and Betty Hill) says, "we believe the teacher's motives may be suspect. Our reasons for thinking this have to do with things that can't be revealed without giving away the instructor's identity."

The researchers were especially impressed with Bartlett and with Abby Brabham, who declared adamantly, "I know I saw the creature and I don't care what happens!"

Is the Dover Demon a hoax? The investigators concluded this is possible but doubt it is the explanation. There is nothing in the witnesses' backgrounds to suggest they are pranksters and much to suggest they are honest upright individuals.

As Webb observes, "None of the four was on drugs or drinking at the time of his or her sighting so far as we were able to determine. . . . None of the principals in this affair made any attempt to go to the newspapers or police to publicize their claims. Instead the sightings gradually leaked out. Finally, the teenagers' own parents, the high school principal, the science instructor and other adults in Dover whose comments were solicited didn't believe the Dover Demon was a fabrication, implying the youths did indeed see 'something.' . . .

"As for the idea the witnesses were victims of somebody else's stunt, this seems most unlikely, chiefly due to the virtual impossibility of creating an animated, lifelike 'demon' of the sort described."

But if the Demon is real, what is it? A UFO being? Perhaps — but then nothing precisely similar has ever been reported before, according to Ted Bloecher, who has collected over 1500 UFO occupant accounts for the Center for UFO Studies.

On the other hand, maybe the Demon is a member of a curious race known to the Cree Indians of eastern Canada as the *Mannegishi*. The *Mannegishi,* Sigurd Olson says in his book *Listening Post,* are supposed to be "little people with round heads and no noses who live with only one purpose: to play jokes on travelers. The little creatures have long spidery legs, arms with six-fingered hands, and live between rocks in the rapids. . . ."

(This article is based upon a report prepared by Walter N. Webb.)

Fate March 1978 - 31-3

RUINS IN THE PACIFIC?

By Michael Watson

A NUMBER of carved stone columns were found under 6000 feet of water off the coast of Peru in 1966, according to Dr. Robert J. Menzies, head of the Duke University Marine Laboratory of Beaufort, N.C. He said the columns were discovered while a research vessel, the *Anton Brunn,* was examining the Milne Edward Deep, an ocean trench which teems with marine life.

Underwater photographs, taken by a submersible camera lowered to within a few feet of the ocean floor, clearly show at least four columns and a square stone block. Two of the columns protrude several feet above the ocean floor and two others lie toppled over. They are about 55 miles off the port of Calcao.

Dr. Menzies has no explanation for the columns; he said, "I have never seen anything like this before." According to one theory, however, the columns may have fallen into the ocean trench from a nearby island during an earthquake, for this is an area where there are many deep fault lines.

It is also possible that Peru's continental shelf was once above the surface of the ocean and Milne Edward Deep was a valley on the shelf. Such a valley might well have been the site of a civilization. If the columns Dr. Menzies happened upon are ruins of that civilization, the faint writing revealed by the photos may have a great deal to tell us about Peruvian cultures of the remote past.